

The recent increase in *Gymnosoma nitens* might well be linked to the same weather factors, indeed, it is probably easier to link this species' increased occurrence to the climate. The recorded years of its capture, 1956, 1977, 1985, 1996, 1997 and 1998 were not necessarily just hot dry years in southern England, but perhaps more importantly they all *followed* very hot and dry years and subsequent mild winters. Our knowledge of the fly's life history is vague and patchy and it is based on only a handful of breeding records from the Continent. Nevertheless, these climatic elements fit what little we do know. It seems clear that hot dry summers ought to favour the host shieldbug, *Sciocoris cursitans* (Fab.), which judging from its ground-dwelling habits, its preferred chalky and sandy habitats and its southern and coastal distribution, is a warmth-loving species. Because *Gymnosoma* overwinters as a larva in its host bug, mild winters ought to occasion low mortality.

Incidentally, according to Kirby (1992) the North Downs near Box Hill are a stronghold for the nationally scarce (notable) *Sciocoris*, so it is not surprising that the fly was first found here. The only specimen of this bug that I have ever come across was on the sandhills at Deal, very close to Sandwich where Plant & Smith (1996) recorded *G. nitens*. Although I did not find *Sciocoris* at Woodlands Farm, I did find the closely related *Podops innecta* (Fab.), another secretive ground-dwelling shieldbug.—RICHARD A. JONES, 135 Friern Road, East Dulwich, London SE22 0AZ.

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*Nysius senecionis* (Schilling) (Hemiptera: Lygaeidae) in Norfolk—Jones (1997, *Br. J. Ent. Nat. Hist.*, 10: 2) urged the submission of notes on the expansion of this bug's range in Britain. Single specimens were found at two sites during the 1997 programme of biological survey: Brancaster Marsh (TF782451), one swept from sea wormwood *Artemisia maritima* L. and sea aster *Aster tripolium* L. at the dune-saltmarsh fringe, 2.ix.1997; and Little Eye, Salthouse Marshes (TG078443), one beneath a mat of sea campion *Silene maritima* With. over sand and pebbles, 8.ix.1997. I would like to thank Peter Kirby for confirming my identification.—KEITH N. A. ALEXANDER, Biological Survey Team, The National Trust, 33 Sheep Street, Cirencester, Gloucestershire GL7 1RQ.